

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 143830

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: MORG, SEDU, US, HO

SUBJECT:REIMBURSEMENT FOR US COAST GUARD ACADEMY EDUCATION

REFS: A. STATE 293616(76) B. STATE 116544
C. TEGUCIGALPA 2404, D. TEGUCIGALPA 2659

1. REFTELS A AND B OUTLINED THE EFFECTS OF NEW LEGISLTATION, UNIQUELY AFFECTING THE COAST GUARD ACADEMY, WHICH ELIMINATED SPECIAL FREE STUDENT QUOTAS FOR AMERICAN REPUBLIC AND PHILIPPINE CANDIDATES, AND SUBSTITUTED REIMBURSABLE EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIMITED NUMBER OF STUDENTS, WITHOUT GEOGRAPHIC PREFERENCE OR LIMITATION. AS EMBASSY AWARE, THERE IS A PROVISION IN THE NEW LAW UNDER WHICH THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION IS AUTHORIZED TO WAIVE REIMBURSEMENT. THERE IS NO AUTOMATICITY TO THIS EXCEPTION.

2. AT PRESENT, ONLY THE US COAST GUARD ACADEMY HAS A
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REIMBURSABLE FOREIGN STUDENT EDUCATION PROGRAM; HOWEVER, SIMILAR LEGISLATION COULD AND MAY WELL EVENTUALLY BE ENACTED AFFECTING THE OTHER SERVICE ACADEMIES. ASSUMING COSTS REMAIN CONSTANT, EACH STUDENT WAIVER WILL COST THE USG SOME 21000 DOLLARS, SINCE, ONCE GRANTED, A STUDENT WAIVER IS UNLIKELY TO BE WITHDRAWN. SIMILARLY, ONCE GRANTED, A NATIONAL

(E.G. HONDURAN) WAIVER COULD NOT EASILY BE WITHDRAWN.

ADDITIONALLY. LEGISLATIVE INTENT VS UNMISTAKABLE: THE RECIPIENT COUNTRY IS TO PAY. (WE ALSO UNDERSTAND, FROM THE DAO'S OFFICE, THAT THE GOH HAS ALREADY INDICATED ITS WILLINGNESS TO PAY FOR THE 2 CANDIDATES.)

3. FOR THESE REASONS, DEPT HAS ADOPTED A POLICY OF CLOSE CASE-BY-CASE SCREENING OF EMBASSY WAIVER RECOMMENDATIONS. IN THIS CONNECTION, DEPT AGREES WITH POINTS RAISED REFTELS C AND D REGARDING USEFULNESS TO BOTH COUNTRIES OF USCG ACADEMY EDUCATION FOR HONDURANS, AND RECOGNIZES THE GOH'S COMPARATIVELY GOOD HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD. DEPT DOES NOT JUDGE, HOWEVER, THAT THERE ARE OVERRIDING BILATERAL ISSUES, OR POSSIBLE CHANGES IN BILATERAL RELATIONSHIPS, WHICH WOULD AFFECT OUR DECISION TO NOT RPT NOT RECOMMEND TO DOT COST WAIVER OF APPROX 10000 DOLLARS ANNUALLY.

4. FYI, BASED ON AN ASSESSMENT OF OUR OVERALL BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP, DEPT HAS RECOMMENDED WAIVER FOR PHILIPPINE STUDENTS. DEPT HAS INFORMED EMBASSY MANAGUA THAT EMBASSY'S PROPOSED NICARAGUAN WAIVER IS NOT RPT NOT WARRANTED. END
FYI. VANCE

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